# Personal Statement: My Experience In Piano Playing

The idea to study in the UK began when I was ten years old and attended English private school when lived abroad for a year. I have never had such a joy of attending school before and I absolutely fell in love with the friendly atmosphere as well as the culture and the language. So I started to study English not just in school when I returned home, but also by watching movies and reading books. After mentally preparing myself and getting closer to my secondary school graduation, I have decided to make my dream come true and so I did and got accepted to Bath Spa University.

I have performed music since five years of age, so I cannot imagine my life differently. First, I learned to play the piano then I studied choir conducting. At this stage I sang in choirs and had singing lessons. I did not know anything about opera, but the ability to produce music with my body got me intrigued and I wanted to know more. I started to have private lessons with Latvian soprano Sonora Vaice who taught me the very technique of an opera singing - breath support, registers and range, but being an opera singer is so much more when studying a vocal piece - acting, language, culture, literature and even history. Only combining these subjects together makes a true professional. Of course the technical ability of the voice is also not comparable to any other singing styles. To be heard over orchestras in any dynamic is fascinating and I may sound esoteric, but when singing opera I feel physically and mentally balanced. The connection between grounded, trained body and infinite freedom that allows to expand the range is something I have never felt before.

I am suitable for the Masters of Music (in Performance) because I have worked for it for 17 years, by attending all the music schools and now a university. I am suitable because I have developed my performance skills through various concerts, competitions, workshops and masterclasses: first prize at the piano competition ‘Concours Musical De France 2004’; finalist diploma at the International Singing Competition ‘The Alida Vane Award’ 2014. One of my recent projects was Youth Opera workshops with Mark Hathaway and Robert Bottriell and my first production at Bath Spa University in Mozart’s ‘The Magic Flute’ as Pamina in 2018.

I had master classes with Joy Mammen, Irena Milkeviciute and Barbro Marklund-Petersone. While at Bath Spa University I have met and learn from great singers like Isobel Buchanan, John Treleaven and Gavin Carr.

Having been involved in singing now for six years I am realizing how hard it is to get into the business. I understand that besides the talent, work and connections, education is what has a big impact on a CV. I am looking for a perspective to work with an opera company and conservatoires work very closely with opera houses, providing great practical experience to their students.

Although sometimes I feel like if I would start singing earlier, I would learn things sooner, but as I have mentioned before, being an opera singer means so much more so I do not regret that I have spent more time exploring music from different aspects. Piano skills are allowing me to play through the accompaniments of my vocal pieces and made me understand that knowing the accompaniment is just as important. When studied conducting I felt what is it like to be part

of the team, a part of the harmony. That helps me when I have to sing a duet or ensemble. Conducting taught me how to listen - to study the score in details, to see and hear all the tempo and dynamic changes, all the rhythmic structures and overall forms of the piece of music. I have learned how to see music being built and make it sound phrased, musically developed, eventually turning it into a story because in the end that is the goal - to share emotions by simply telling a story with the help of a musical instrument, either it is piano, baton or a voice.